

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /146 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7999

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT/CI/MX

SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH EX-CHILEAN AMBASSADOR TO MEXICO

1. SEPTEMBER 17 EXCELSIOR CARRIES INTERVIEW WITH HUGO VIGORENA RAMIREZ WHO RESIGNED AS AMBASSADOR TO MEXICO FOLLOWING CHILEAN COUP. VIGORENA HAD BEEN AT MEXICO CITY AIRPORT SEPTEMBER 16 TO GREET ALLENDE'S WIDOW. HE WAS PICTURED PROMINENTLY IN COMPANY WITH PRESIDENT AND MRS. ECHEVERRIA. LIKEWISE, DESPITE HIS RESIGNATION, HE EVIDENTLY IS STILL OCCUPYING RESIDENCE.

2. IN HIS REMARKS TO EXCELSIOR, VIGORENA SAID THAT HE "HAD PROOF" THAT CIA WAS INVOLVED IN ALLENDE OUSTER. HE STATED THAT A PLAN KNOWN AS "OPERATION CENTAUR" HAD BEEN DRAWN UP MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO; THE PROOF OF CIA INVOLVEMENT "UNFORTUNATELY FELL INTO OUR HANDS TOO LATE". LATER IN INTERVIEW HE STATED THAT DETAILS OF "OPERATION CENTAUR" HAD BECOME KNOWN TO CHILEANS ABOUT A MONTH AND A HALF AGO. IT WAS "EVIDENTLY THE PURPOSE OF THE CIA TO DEPOSE PRESIDENT ALLENDE AND THIS PLAN HAD A DECIDED INFLUENCE IN THE FINAL RESULTS"; VIGORENA STATED THAT ALLENDE KNEW OF THE PLAN. EX-AMBASSADOR DECLINED TO GIVE ANY DETAILS "BECAUSE THERE ARE MANY PERSONS INVOLVED AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS AT THIS MOMENT TO MENTION THEIR

NAMES". HE CITED AS EVIDENCE OF CIA INVOLVEMENT REPORTS THAT WASHINGTON KNEW OF PENDING COUP SOME 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE, FACT THAT AMBASSADOR DAVIS HAD MADE A QUICK TRIP TO WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY BEFORE COUP, AND FACT THAT FOUR US WAR VESSELS HAD BEEN OFF CHILEAN COAST "SUPPOSEDLY FOR ANNUAL MANEUVERS WITH CHILEAN NAVY". VIGORENA SURMISED THAT PLAN HAD BEEN TO OUST ALLENDE DURING HIS ATTENDANCE AT ALGIERS NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE BUT THAT WHEN HE DECIDED NOT TO GO, PLAN HAD TO BE MODIFIED.

3. SEPTEMBER 15 EL SOL REPORTED THAT VIGORENA IS CONSULTING WITH OTHER ALLENDE-APPOINTED COLLEAGUES IN CENTRAL AMERICA ABOUT FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A "GOVERNMENT IN EXILE" IN MEXICO. ADMITTEDLY, THIS STEP WOULD DEPEND, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, ON GOM ATTITUDE TOWARDS NEW REGIME.

4. DEPARTMENT PASS SANTIAGO AS DESIRED.
DEAN

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